

PRE-EXISTING INJURIES POLICY

What is a pre-existing injury

A pre-existing injury is an injury that occurred when the child was in the care of a parent or carer or another care professional for example a childminder and arrives at the setting with this injury.

On arrival

If the child arrives with an existing injury parents or carers must inform staff on their arrival and will be asked to complete an 'accident at home form' detailing how the injury occurred and ensuring staff members have current information about a child if they become unwell as a result of the injury. If staff members notice a pre existing injury, however, and were not made aware by the parents, staff must complete an 'accident at home' form for parents to complete on their return.

The form contains the following information

- *Child's full name
- *Child's date of birth
- *Date of injury
- *Description of injury
- *How the injury occurred
- *The child's account of the injury
- *Any treatment or medical aid sought
- *Parent or carer signature and date
- *Staff member signature and date
- *Designated safeguard lead signature and date
- *Action taken

Why we record pre-existing injuries

We record pre-existing injuries to

- *To safeguard children by identifying suspected child abuse or neglect.
- *To ensure we are undertaking our duty-following our child protection responsibilities, policies and procedures effectively.
- *To consider whether the injury is non-accidental.
- *To consider whether there is likely to be child abuse or neglect taking place.
- *To help you to decide about whether an injury or concern should be reported.
- *To consider whether there is a pattern or several injuries that would give you cause to be concerned or doubtful about the explanation given by parents or carers, to prompt you to consider reporting it.

Procedure

The parent or carer accompanying the child will be asked what happened and be informed that a confidential record will need to be made of the injury. If there is any suspicion that speaking to the parent or carer about the injury may put the child at risk of harm, then the advice of the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be sought.

If staff members notice a pre-existing injury, however, were not made aware by the parents or carer the staff member will note the injury, will then ask the child how it happened. This will be done in a friendly and non-demanding manner. Parent or carer will be asked or telephoned, about the injury and asked to sign the form when collecting the child.

An 'accident at home' form will be completed by the member of staff and passed to the Designated Safeguard Lead the same day.

The Designated Safeguard Lead will consider the following

- *Does the explanation from the parent or carer appear to be plausible
- *consider the age and stage of development of the child, could the injury have been accidental based on the knowledge of the individual child
- *Consider potential risk factors, such as the child has additional needs.

*If there has been a change in the families/child's behaviour that has prompted any concerns

*Consider the background of the child and family if the child is involved with social services, the social worker must be informed immediately

Consider the signs and symptoms of harm does the injury seem plausible based on the knowledge and understanding of the individual child and family circumstances

*Does the description of the event from the parent or carer match the child's description

A completed form will be kept in the appropriate folder and remain confidential.

A decision will be made by the designated Safeguard lead as to what if any action is required. Safeguarding procedures must be followed regarding any concern. A referral should always be made if the description from both the parent or carer and child does not match.

Storage

All 'accident at home' forms are stored in a confidential file at the setting. These are stored separately to the child's learning record, are easily accessible to appropriate staff.

The records will be checked on a termly basis by the designated Safeguard Lead, to check for a cluster of injuries.